

BIBLES INTERNATIONAL PARTICIPATES IN ECUMENICAL MEETINGS

April 29, 2000 (David Cloud, Fundamental Baptist Information Service, P.O. Box 610368, Port Huron, MI 48061, 866-295-4143, fbns@wayoflife.org) - There are many ways that some fundamental Baptists are becoming involved in unscriptural ecumenical ventures. One was Promise Keepers. Many churches which claim to be independent fundamental Baptist have participated in the radically ecumenical Promise Keepers movement. Music is another thing that is breaking down the walls of biblical separation in many independent Baptist churches. These open their doors to ecumenical music groups and to Contemporary Christian Music, which is permeated with the ecumenical philosophy. Another example of this is in the area of missions. Some independent Baptist mission boards and missionaries which represent themselves to the churches as biblical separatists and staunch fundamentalists practice ecumenism on the mission fields. An example of this is the participation of Bibles International in the radically ecumenical Bible society meetings since 1990.

The following report first appeared in O Timothy magazine, Volume 9, Issue 9, 1992:

Bibles International, an arm of Baptist Mid-Missions, participated in an ecumenical meeting held in Reading, England, April 27-30 of this year [1992]. The April gathering was the fourth in a series of meetings that had their origin at the Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization Congress in Manila in July 1989, where representatives of Bible organizations agreed to hold regular meetings to discuss co-operation in Bible work. Other meetings were held at Horsleys Green, England, October 1990; Orlando, Florida, July 1991; and Dallas, Texas, October 1991. According to a news report issued by the International Bible Society, Bibles International has participated in all of these meetings.

The Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization was founded by Billy Graham and other leaders of the New Evangelical movement and is a bold enemy of biblical separation. It has worked to break down the biblical walls of separation between Protestants and Baptists of all stripes, Roman Catholics, etc.

In participating in these meetings, Bibles International joined with the Bible League, Bibles to All, Evangel Bible Translators, Every Home for Christ, Institute for Bible Translation, International Bible Society, Lutheran Bible Translators, Open Doors, Pioneer Bible Translators, Scripture Gift Mission, Scripture Union, the United Bible Societies, Vida Life Publishers, WEC International, World Gospel Crusades, and Wycliffe Bible Translators. We also know that Living Bibles International participated in at least one of the meetings. (Living Bibles merged with the International Bible Society in recent years.)

We wrote to Baptist Mid-Missions asking for clarification on this matter, and received a reply dated July 24 from Fredric Carlson, Division Director of Bibles International. He said, "You are correct that I attended the forum of Bible translation agencies, for the purpose of exchanging information about translations in process and planned by other agencies, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication of the large investment required to produce high-quality translations true to the Greek and Hebrew texts."

This is amazing. Does Mr. Carlson really think Wycliffe and the United Bible Societies produce "high-quality translations true to the Greek and Hebrew texts?" Apparently so, but he is desperately mistaken in this assumption. First of all, none of the other organizations involved with this forum are committed to the Received Text. They all use the corrupted Westcott-Hort text. How is it possible, then, that their translations are high quality? Some of their versions might be true to the Greek and Hebrew text, but it is a corrupted Greek and Hebrew text.

Further, Wycliffe and the United Bible Societies are almost entirely given over to dynamic equivalency translation. They follow a methodology similar to that used by the translators of the Good News for Modern Man. John Beekman, translation coordinator for Wycliffe, even supports the Living Bible. According to Beekman, "The Living Bible is the most readable and the most natural English translation available. The fast-growing ministry of Living Bibles International is worthy of the prayer support of all of us." In a 1987 letter from Geoff Horner of the British and Foreign Bible Society, I learned that "...virtually all translations being carried out at present directly by UBS [United Bible Societies] are CLT's [common language translations]." In our report Dynamic Equivalency: Death Knell of Pure Scripture we expose the wickedness of this loose, paraphrasing type of translation. This report is available at the Way of Life web site under the Bible Version section of the End Times Apostasy Database -- <http://wayoflife.org/~dcloud>.

The UNITED BIBLE SOCIETIES, which yokes together 135 national Bible societies from around the world, have given us such "high-quality" versions as The New English Bible, The Today's English Version, and The Bible for Today's Family. The Today's English Version perverts practically every passage dealing with the deity of Jesus Christ, and removes the word "blood" from fourteen key New Testament passages dealing with the Atonement. The New English Version perverts practically every one of the great Messianic prophecies. An example is Psalm 22:16, which reads, "...they have hacked off my hands and my feet." The editor of the Today's English Version, Robert Bratcher, and the editor of the New English Version, C.H. Dodd, both deny the deity of Jesus Christ and the divine inspiration of the Scriptures. The United Bible Societies owns the copyright to all of these perversions.

The United Bible Societies are as modernistic and ecumenical as it is possible to be. They work hand-in-hand with the World Council of Churches as well as the Roman Catholic Church. Many Roman Catholics are leaders within the UBS structure. Not only are their versions based on a corrupted Greek and Hebrew text, and not only are their versions tainted with modernistic hands, and not only are they largely mere paraphrases, but they are also available in Roman Catholic editions with the apocryphal books included and with the Imprimatur of the Catholic church. Our report Unholy Hands on God's Holy Book exposes the gross apostasy of the United Bible Societies. This report is available at the Way of Life web site under the Bible Version section of the End Times Apostasy Database -- <http://wayoflife.org/~dcloud>.

WYCLIFFE BIBLE TRANSLATORS are extremely ecumenical. Founder W. Cameron Townsend encouraged Roman Catholics Paul and Ginny Witte to organize the LOGOS translators. Townsend sent charismatic David du Plessis to the Vatican II Council in 1962 as Wycliffe's representative. Wycliffe's Bible Translation Day in Washington, D.C., in 1971, was sponsored by the Catholic Bible Association and the Lutheran Bible Translation Society.

Wycliffe people are involved ecumenically throughout the world. For example, Scripture selections in the Tiwi language were published in 1985 by Wycliffe Bible Translators in collaboration with Roman Catholics. According to Christianity Today for March 5, 1982, Allan Shannon, a coordinator for Wycliffe, is a prime mover in the Catholic-Charismatic movement in Peru.

Many of Wycliffe's workers are charismatic. The Logos Journal, in a 1973 report, said, "Although evangelical in theology ... an amazing number of charismatics have joined the organization [Wycliffe] in recent years." The late charismatic leader Jamie Buckingham, editor-at-large for Charisma magazine, was a consultant for Wycliffe. Wycliffe's ecumenical and charismatic commitment was evidenced in their total involvement with the massive charismatic-ecumenical North American Congress on the Holy Spirit and World Evangelization, in New Orleans, July 1987, and in Indianapolis, August 1990. The editor was at both congresses with press credentials. Wycliffe participated in these meetings in spite of the fact that 50% of the participants were Roman Catholic. Joann Shetler, well-known Wycliffe translator working in the Philippines, flew to the States to speak at the New Orleans conference. These things are documented in the editor's

book Evangelicals and Rome (Way of Life Literature, 1701 Harns Rd., Oak Harbor, WA 98277. 360-675-8311, fbns@wayoflife.org).

These are the type of people Mr. Carlson and Baptist Mid Missions' Bibles International are fellowshiping with. The Bible warns, "Be not deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners" (1 Corinthians 15:33).

Bibles International claims to be a fundamental, separatist agency and also claims to be committed strictly to the majority text (though they refuse to define what majority text). This kind of ecumenical activity, though, belies that claim. We would urge the friends of Baptist Mid-Missions to raise a voice against this serious compromise. Fundamentalist Bible believers should have no common cause with modernists and New Evangelicals. We are not to dialogue and coordinate with those who refuse to obey the Word of God. Further, it is the strangest kind of inconsistency for those who allegedly believe the Received Text is the preserved Word of God and formal equivalency is the proper method of translation to associate with organizations which deny both of these positions and which corrupt the Word of God with their innovations.

I WILL CONCLUDE WITH A WORD ABOUT THE GREEK TEXT USED BY BIBLES INTERNATIONAL. It must be noted that they do not base their translations strictly upon the Received Text underlying the King James Bible. I was told several years ago by Frederic Carlson that they sometimes follow "Majority Text" variations on the Received Text. The society's policy statement does not specify a particular Greek text, saying simply, "While many texts in Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek, and many versions in English and other languages may be consulted, final decisions on textual content are based on the Massoretic text of the Old Testament and the Majority Text of the New Testament." The term Majority Text used to be synonymous with the Received Text underlying the KJV, but this is not the case today. The Hodges-Farstad Majority Text was published by Thomas Nelson in 1982. It contains roughly 1,900 modifications of the Received Text. The Hodges-Farstad methodology consults Greek manuscript evidence alone and ignores other important evidence such as the lectionaries, translations, and writings of ancient church leaders. Another list of alleged Majority Text readings is contained in back of the Interlinear Bible by Jay Green. He lists roughly 1,500 variations from the Received Text.

Having said all of this, we must hasten to add that in most languages today the choice of sound Bibles is severely limited or nonexistent, and the Bibles International translations are vastly superior to the standard ones being produced by groups like the United Bible Societies and Wycliffe Bible Translators.